

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

December 8, [1828]

It grieves my My dear Maria to find by your letter to Sister Hays, that you were not in health and that you had some thoughts of quitting home in pursuit of that blessing _ if such is still the case my sweet Sister, would it not be best for you to come to us _ I am sure a separation from your little boys would be a source of so much continual anxiety that what ever good you might derive from the change by day _ would be undone by watchful nights & ruminations of maternal solicitude, whereas if you would bring them all here, I would take care of them for you, and give you every other comfort in my power, and if my dear Ben must be absent from his factory perhaps he could do something to forward his interest _ besides being with his family. as yet our winter has not commenced _ the river is high _ and the roads not bad _ when you are here you know the boys could go to School. and I really believe you would be as much charmed with Phila. as the beautiful Miss Marshal is _ for assuredly you would bring as much into its circles to charm as she has _ it is true her bright Face and Amiable manners, are as attractive and engaging as was anticipated. and she has not disappointed the high raised expectations of our fastidious citizens _ but then it is not beauty alone that has claims even when accompanied with so much youth & loveliness _ and I have a most earnest desire of giving you a winters run particularly as I am in hopes you would derive benefit from the experiment but then I do not wish you to come alone _ the dear little boys would be such an enlivening addition to our domestic party _ we have a little room just fit to banish them into, where Sarah & Horace study or play when we do not want their company and when they would be as merry as you could desire without hearing too much of their noise _ then, Boston row is very pleasant [end of page]

a pretty good neighbourhood, our own girls next door _ and our Sisters not far off _ you would make our brothers so cheerful & contented that I verily believe, while I invite you, with a view to your own benefit, that I am proposing what would most of all contribute to my own happiness _ and this to your charitable disposition is perhaps as persuasive an argument as I could use _

Well _ "the long agony is over" with our dear Ellen, and a long life of happiness will I trust ensure to repay the trials she bore so patiently _ the wedding was a very pleasant one _ her new papa seemed truly grateful and the tame lover was transported

into an enthusiastic groom _ he really never appeared to so much advantage here _ and Ellen writes in such delighted terms of his consequence at home _ and the high estimation he holds in the community of Baltre. that if we had not already seen how ardently she loved him for his own sake _ we might suppose her pride elated by finding him of so much [estimation] in the eyes of the public _ our Sister bears her loss much better than was expected, indeed her spirits is revived by the fulfilment of one daughters happiness _ and I have not seen her so cheerful for many years _ the only invalid in the family is our poor cousin Rachel Cohen, whose situation does not improve _ her disease was pronounced rhumatism of the muscles and it is nearly five months since she has been confined to her bed _ the greater part of the time in extreme suffering _ I am very much afraid her constitution will sink under it _ altho' some of these alarming symptoms which so fatally attended our friend Merediths attack are yet discernable poor Girl her life has been one of severe trial without sufficient energy to overcome an unhappy attachment and too much confidence [in the] faith of one who did not deserve it _ she pined away the years of youth _ and now that her domestic usefulness had opened a new series of enjoyment for her _ she is a victim to disease _ [end of page]

our brothers are well Hyman & Jac seemed to have some "compunctions visiting," this morning when they saw me writing and bid me tell our dear Ben that they would write in a few days, by which I suppose them delinquents _ they are still in the merciless hands of these two lawyer judges _ who seem determined to waste their energies by long delay _ I do not know whether the consumption of so much time in waiting for [the?] decision is not more ruinous than a complete failure of all their expectations would have been at once _ a year & half has passed away in that state which the wise one said "maketh the heart sick" and all the other cruel circumstances [which] has attended this unnatural affair, has been so aggravated by the lengthened torture of waiting from meeting to meeting that I begin to despair ever seeing an end to it _ but no matter we are destined to bear the ills of fate in our [wa...] [...] and since we could never chose wisely, what to [...] is best to take what is prepared for us and submit patiently.

our dear little nieces & nephews are all well, Horace at last goes to school, which he does not think half so pleasant as lessons at home _ Sarah is becoming quite an accomplished little girl, and the rest as you left them _ we expect Gratz Etting home in a few days _ when last he wrote he only waited to see his Brother Edward, before he left Centre _ he is quite well again, embrace your dear Children for me _ and pray my dear Sister let me hear from you soon give my best

love to our dear Ben, and my God Bless you with every
good your hearts can desire. and health, precious health
to crown your enjoyment of them

believe me always Your
affectionate Sister RG _

Tell Mrs. Hunt, Catherine & the Dr.
are well and give my love to her _
Decr. 8th.

[Address:]

To
Mrs. Benjamin Gratz
Lexington Ky

[Editors' Note: The year of this letter is based on the date of Ellen Hays's wedding to Samuel Ett
which occurred on November 8, 1828.]